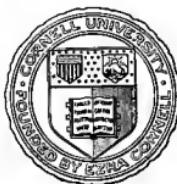


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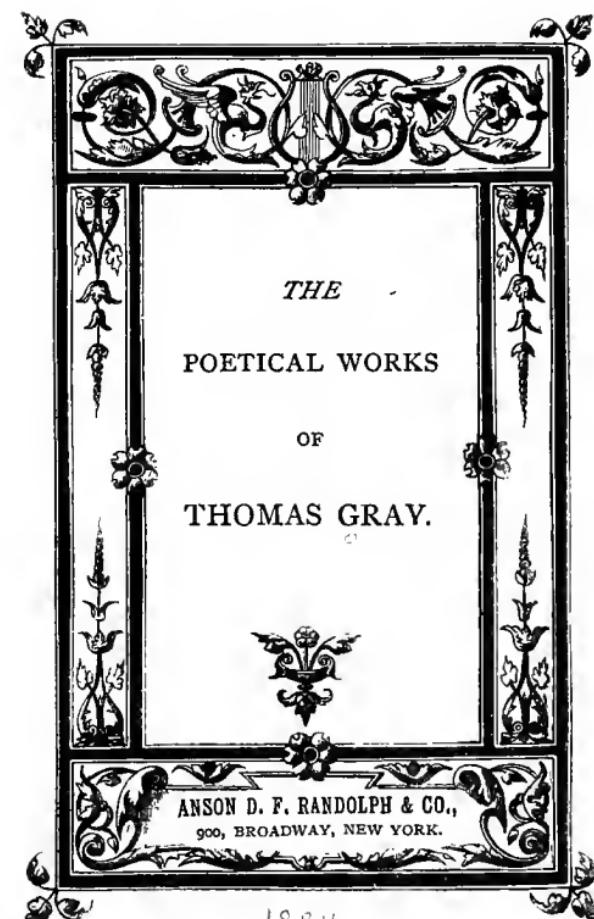
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"Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade!"



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS GRAY.

ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & CO.,
900, BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

1884



MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

THOMAS GRAY was born in Cornhill, London, on the day after Christmas-day, in the year 1716. His father, Philip Gray, was a money scrivener, and, according to most accounts, a hard-hearted man. His mother, whose maiden name was Dorothy Antrobus, appears to have been one of the most excellent and amiable of beings. Thomas was the only one of her twelve children who lived beyond infancy, and on this account she treated him with the greatest tenderness, which he always endeavoured to repay by the most attentive care. After her death, he seldom mentioned her name without a sigh.

Through the instrumentality of his uncle, Mr. Antrobus, who was one of the College tutors, Thomas Gray

was educated at Eton, where he became the friend of Horace Walpole, and of Richard West, the son of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. In the year 1736, Gray entered at Peter House, Cambridge; and at the same time, Horace Walpole went to King's College. Neither appears to have spent much time at his college studies, and in 1738 Gray left Peter House without a degree. In the spring of 1739, he set out with Walpole on a tour through France and Italy. They were absent about two years and a half, when the friends disagreed, and Gray returned to England, just in time to witness his father's death. Soon after, his mother went to live at Stoke, near Windsor, and he returned to Cambridge, where he continued to reside, except during a few intervals, all the rest of his life.

In the year 1742, Gray wrote his "Ode to Spring;" this was followed by the "Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College," and the "Hymn to Adversity." Little notice was taken of these productions, and it was not till the "Elegy written in a Country Church-yard" was published, in the year 1749, that his works obtained any great share of popularity. This well-known "Elegy" has perhaps been reprinted more frequently than any other poem in the English language, and we learn that it is at the present day, above all, the greatest favourite in America. In 1753,

Gray lost his mother, upon whose grave he placed this inscription—

BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER,
HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF
DOROTHY GRAY,
WIDOW; THE CAREFUL TENDER MOTHER
OF MANY CHILDREN; ONE OF WHOM ALONE
HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER.

During the following three years Gray wrote the "Ode on the Progress of Poetry," and "The Bard." In the year 1756, he left Peter House, and "migrated" to Pembroke Hall, where he spent all his later years.

In 1768 the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge became vacant, and Gray received the appointment from the Duke of Grafton; who in the very next year was elected Chancellor of the University, when Gray wrote the Installation Ode, entitled "For Music," which was received with great applause.

In the autumn of 1770, in order to recover his health, he made a tour in Wales; but the symptoms of his illness increased, and in July in the next year he was seized with an attack of gout in the stomach, from which he died on the 30th of the same month.

Gray's Letters written to his friends West and Horace Walpole, and afterwards to Mr. Mason, to

whom he left all his books and papers, are among the most charming that have ever been printed. His Latin poems are also justly extolled for their elegance and grace. He was considered the most learned man of his day, and it is much to be regretted that he did not devote more of his time to authorship. His "Letters and Poems," with "Memoirs of his Life and Writings," were published by his friend Mason, four years after his death.





ILLUSTRATIONS.

*Drawn by Birket Foster, and engraved by
W. Palmer and E. M. Wimperis.*

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*Ornamental head and tail pieces drawn by W. HARRY ROGERS, and
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ON THE SPRING.

LO ! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year !
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring :
While, whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade,

Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care ;
The panting herds repose :
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
The busy murmur glows !
The insect-youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon :
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of Man :
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,

In Fortune's varying colours drest :
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply :
Poor moralist ! and what art thou ?
A solitary fly !
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display :
On hasty wings thy youth is flown ;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.





ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,

Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.

'TWAS on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow ;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared :
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw ; and purr'd applause.

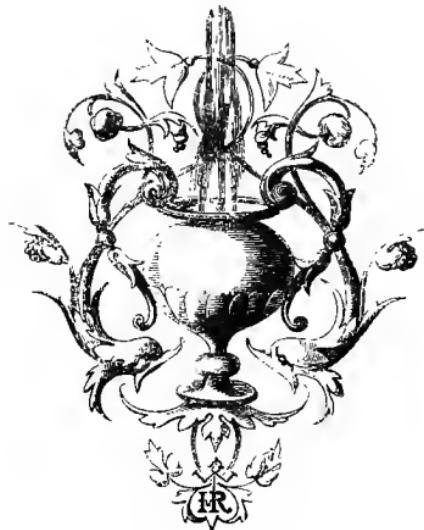
Still had she gazed ; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
 The Genii of the stream :
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
 Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw :
A whisker first, and then a claw,
 With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise ?
 What Cat's averse to fish ?

Presumptuous maid ! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
 Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled.)
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled,
 She tumbled headlong in.

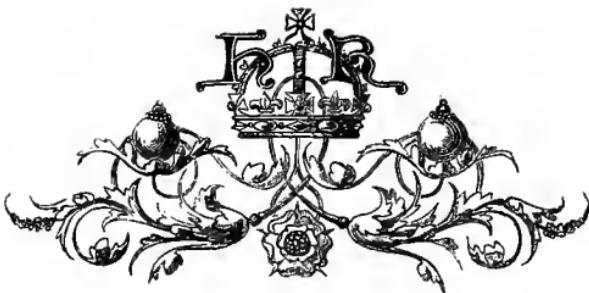
Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mew'd to ev'ry wat'ry God,
 Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd :
Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan heard.
 A fav'rite has no friend !

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all, that glisters, gold.





"Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade!"



*ON A DISTANT
PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.*

"Ανθρωπος, ίκανη πρόφασις είς τό δυστυχεῖν.

MENANDER.

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade ;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way :

Ah, happy hills ! ah, pleasing shade !
Ah, fields beloved in vain !
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain !

I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace ;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave ?
The captive linnet which enthral ?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball ?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murm'ring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty :
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry :

Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest ;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast :
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigour born ;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas ! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play ;
No sense have they of ills to come,
No care beyond to-day :
Yet see, how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train !
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murth'rous band !
Ah, tell them, they are men !

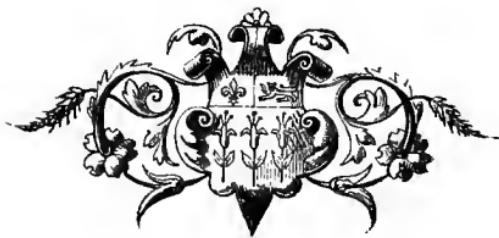
These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind ;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart ;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo ! in the vale of years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen :

This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
 Those in the deeper vitals rage :
Lo ! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
 And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings : all are men,
 Condemn'd alike to groan ;
The tender for another's pain,
 Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah ! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
 And happiness too swiftly flies ?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,
 'Tis folly to be wise.





HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

—Ζῆνα—

Τὸν φρονεῖν Βροτούς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τῷ πάθει μαθῶν
Θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

ÆSCH. *Agam.* ver. 181.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour
 The bad affright, afflict the best !
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
 Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
To thee he gave the heav'nly birth,
 And bade to form her infant mind.

Stern rugged nurse ! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore :
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flatt'ring foe ;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend :
Warm Charity, the gen'ral friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh ! gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand !
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Not circled with the vengeful band.

(As by the impious thou art seen,)
With thund'ring voice and threat'ning mien,
With screaming Horror's fun'ral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty :

Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound, my heart.
The gen'rous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.





THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

A Pindaric Ode.

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν' ἐσ
Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἐρμηνέων
Χατίζει. PINDAR. *Ol. 11.*

I. I.

A WAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign;
Now rolling down the steep amain,

Headlong, impetuous, see it pour ;
The rocks and nodding groves rebeelow to the roar.

I. 2.

Oh ! Sov'reign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing :
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day ;
With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures ;

Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet :
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare :
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way :
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.



II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await !
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of fate !
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he giv'n in vain the heav'ly Muse ?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky ;

Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war.

II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the od'rous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and gen'rous Shame,
Th' unconquerable Mind, and freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown th' *Æ*gean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinsths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish !



"In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, wheree lucid Avon stray'd."

Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around ;
Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound :
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion ! next thy sea-encircled coast.



III. I.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face : the dauntless child
Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.
" This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year :
Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy !
This can unlock the gates of joy ;

Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

III. 2.

Nor second He, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of th' abyss to spy.

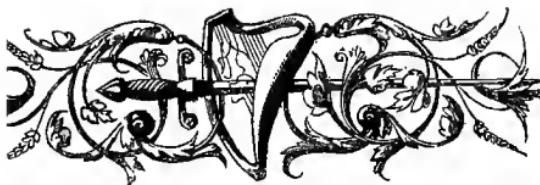
He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time :
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw ; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding
pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !
Bright-eyed Fancy, hov'ring o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah ! 'tis heard no more——

Oh ! lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now ? Tho' he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure deep of air :
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun :
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great





THE BARD.

A Pindaric Ode.

I. 1.

RUIN seize thee, ruthless King !
Confusion on thy banners wait ;
Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears !"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.



"Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood."

Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance :
"To arms !" cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quiv-
'ring lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er cold Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood ;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air ;)
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
" Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath !
O'er thee, O King ! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe ;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

" Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main :
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed :
Mountains, ye mourn in vain

Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale :
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail ;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries--
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly hand,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land :
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.



II. I.

“ Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding sheet of Edward's race

Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright ;
The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king !

She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of heav'n. What terrors round him wait !
Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And sorrow's faded form, and solitude behind.

II. 2.

“ Mighty victor, mighty lord !
Low on his funeral couch he lies !
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled ?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born ?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm

In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes ;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm ;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his ev'ning prey.

II. 3.

“ Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast :
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse ?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread :
The bristled boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.

Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.



III. I.

“Edward, lo ! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay ! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn :
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh ! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
 Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll ?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight !
 Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul !
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail !

III. 2.

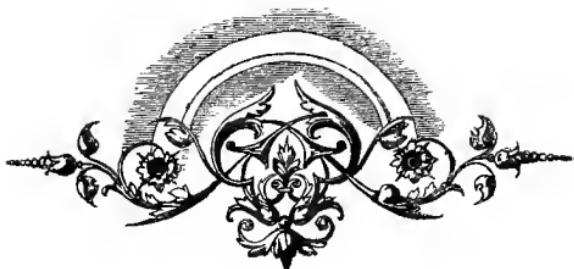
“ Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear ;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine !
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line ;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play,
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear ;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heav'n her many-colour'd wings.

III. 3.

“ The verse adorn again
Fierce war, and faithful love,
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.

A voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear ;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
 Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day ?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me ; with joy I see
 The diff'rent doom our fates assign.
Be thine despair, and sceptred care,
 To triumph, and to die, are mine.”
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.





ODE FOR MUSIC.

(Irregular.)

I. AIR.

“ **H**ENCE, avaunt ('tis holy ground),
Comus, and his midnight-crew,
And Ignorance with looks profound,
And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,
Mad Sedition's cry profane,
Servitude that hugs her chain,
Nor in these consecrated bowers
Let painted Flatt'ry hide her serpent-train in flowers.

CHORUS.

Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain,
Dare the Muse's walk to stain.
While bright-eyed Science watches round :
Hence, away, 'tis holy ground !”



"Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
That Contemplation loves."

II. RECITATIVE.

From yonder realms of empyrean day
Bursts on my ear th' indignant lay :
There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine,
The few, whom geniis gave to shine
Thro' every unborn age, and undiscover'd clime.
Rapt in celestial transport they :
Yet hither oft a glance from high
They send of tender sympathy
To bless the place, where on their opening soul
First the genuine ardour stole.
'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell,
And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime,
And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III. AIR.

“ Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
That Contemplation loves,
Where willowy Camus lingers with delight !
Oft at the blush of dawn
I trod your level lawn,
Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy.”

IV. RECITATIVE.

But hark ! the portals sound, and pacing forth
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go :
Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow
From haughty Gallia torn,
And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding Love, and princely Clare,
And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose,
The rival of her crown and of her woes,
And either Henry there,
The murder'd saint, and the majestic lord
That broke the bonds of Rome.
(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human passions now no more,
Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb.)

ACCOMPANIED.

All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,
And bade these awful fanes and turrets rise,
To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come ;
And thus they speak in soft accord
The liquid language of the skies :

V. QUARTETTO.

“ What is grandeur, what is power ?
Heavier toil, superior pain.
What the bright reward we gain ?
The grateful memory of the good.
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee’s collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music’s melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude.”

VI. RECITATIVE.

Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud
The venerable Marg’ret see !
“ Welcome, my noble son (she cries aloud),
To this, thy kindred train, and me :
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace
A Tudor’s fire, a Beaufort’s grace.

AIR.

Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flow’r unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round heav’n’s altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head :
Shall raise from earth the latent gem
To glitter on the diadem.

VII. RECITATIVE.

“ Lo ! Granta waits to lead her blooming band,
 Not obvious, nor obtrusive, she
 No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings ;
 Nor dares with courtly tongue refined
 Profane thy inborn royalty of mind :
 She reveres herself and thee.
 With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow,
 The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings,
 And to thy just, thy gentle hand,
 Submits the fasces of her sway,
 While spirits blest above and men below
 Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII. GRAND CHORUS.

“ Thro' the wild waves as they roar,
 With watchful eye and dauntless mien,
 Thy steady course of honour keep,
 Nor fear the rocks, nor seek the shore :
 The Star of Brunswick smiles serene,
 And gilds the horrors of the deep.”





THE FATAL SISTERS.

AN ODE. FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

NOW the storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare,)
Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow !
('Tis of human entrails made)
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista, black terrific maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda, see,
Join the wayward work to aid :
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,
Wading through th' ensanguined field,

Gondula, and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill, and ours to spare :
Spite of danger he shall live,
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert-beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound :
Fate demands a nobler head ;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see ;
Long her strains in sorrow steep :
Strains of immortality !

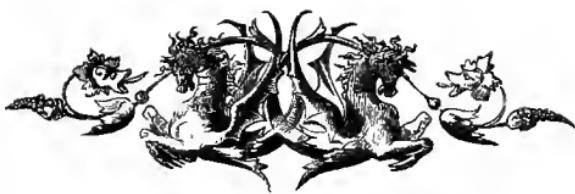
Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
Sisters, weave the web of death ;
Sisters, cease ; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands !
Songs of joy and triumph sing !
Joy to the victorious bands ;
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, thro' each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed :
Each her thundering falchion wield ;
Each bestride her sable steed.
Hurry, hurry, to the field !





THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

AN ODE. FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

UPROSE the king of men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed ;
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode.
Him the dog of darkness spied ;
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,
(While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,
Foam and human gore distill'd :)
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin ;
And long pursues with fruitless yell,
The father of the powerful spell.

Onward still his way he takes,
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of hell arise.

Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate ;
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid.
Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme ;
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead :
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

PROPHETESS.

What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb ?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of night ?
Long on these mould'ring bones have beat
The winter's snow, the summer's heat,
The drenching dews, and driving rain !
Let me, let me sleep again.

Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest ?

ODIN.

A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know ;
Tell me what is done below,
For whom yon glitt'ring board is spread,
Dress'd for whom yon golden bed ?

PROPHETESS.

Mantling in the goblet see
The pure bev'rage of the bee :
O'er it hangs the shield of gold ;
'Tis the drink of Balder bold :
Balder's head to death is giv'n.
Pain can reach the sons of heav'n !
Unwilling I my lips unclose :
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Once again my call obey,
Prophetess, arise, and say,

What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate ?

PROPHETESS.

In Hoder's hand the hero's doom ;
His brother sends him to the tomb.
Now my weary lips I close :
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Prophetess, my spell obey,
Once again arise, and say,
Who th' avenger of his guilt,
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt ?

PROPHETESS.

In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,
A wondrous boy shall Rinda bear,
Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair,
Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam,
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile
Flaming on the fun'ral pile.

Now my weary lips I close :
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Yet a while my call obey ;
Prophetess, awake, and say,
What virgins these, in speechless woe,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,
That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils that float in air ?
Tell me whence their sorrows rose :
Then I leave thee to repose.

PROPHETESS.

Ha ! no traveller art thou,
King of men, I know thee now ;
Mightiest of a mighty line——

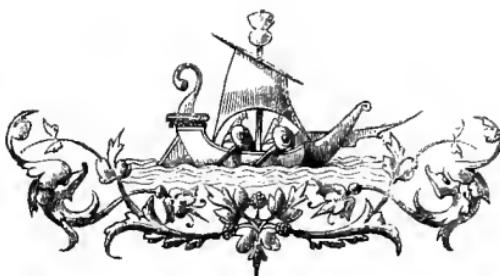
ODIN.

No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, nor prophetess of good ;
But mother of the giant brood !

PROPHETESS.

Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall inquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again ;
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain ;
Never, till substantial Night
Has reassumed her ancient right ;
Till wrapt in flames, in ruin hurl'd,
Sinks the fabric of the world.





THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

A FRAGMENT. FROM THE WELSH.

O WEN'S praise demands my song,
Owen swift, and Owen strong ;
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,
Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.
He nor heaps his brooded stores,
Nor on all profusely pours ;
Lord of every regal heart,
Liberal hand, and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came ;

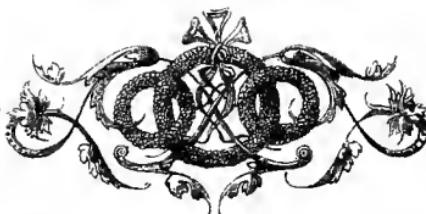
This the force of Eirin hiding,
Side by side as proudly riding,
On her shadow long and gay
Lochlin plows the wat'ry way ;
There the Norman sails afar
Catch the winds and join the war ;
Black and huge along they sweep,
Burdens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands
The dragon-son of Mona stands ;
In glitt'ring arms and glory drest,
High he rears his ruby crest.
There the thund'ring strokes begin,
There the press, and there the din ;
Talymalfra's rocky shore
Echoing to the battle's roar.
Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood,
Backward Meinai rolls his flood ;
While, heap'd his master's feet around,
Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground.
Where his glowing eye-balls turn,
Thousand banners round him burn :
Where he points his purple spear,
Hasty, hasty rout is there,
Marking with indignant eye

Fear to stop, and shame to fly.
There confusion, terror's child,
Conflict fierce, and ruin wild,
Agony, that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable death.

* * * * *





SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST.

IN vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire :
The birds in vain their amorous descant join ;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire :
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine ;
A different object do these eyes require ;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men :
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear :
To warm their little loves the birds complain :
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.



EPITAPH

ON MRS. JANE CLERKE.

LO ! where this silent marble weeps,
A friend, a wife, a mother sleeps :
A heart, within whose sacred cell
The peaceful virtues loved to dwell.
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity were there.
In agony, in death resign'd,
She felt the wound she left behind ;
Her infant image here below
Sits smiling on a father's woe :
Whom what awaits, while yet he strays
Along the lonely vale of days ?
A pang, to secret sorrow dear ;
A sigh ; an unavailing tear ;
Till Time shall every grief remove,
With life, with memory, and with love.



EPITAPH

ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

HERE, foremost in the dangerous paths of fame,
Young Williams fought for England's fair
renown ;

His mind each Muse, each Grace adorn'd his frame,
Nor Envy dared to view him with a frown.

At Aix, his voluntary sword he drew,
There first in blood his infant honour seal'd ;
From fortune, pleasure, science, love, he flew,
And scorn'd repose when Britain took the field.

With eyes of flame, and cool undaunted breast,
Victor he stood on Belleisle's rocky steeps—
Ah, gallant youth ! this marble tells the rest,
Where melancholy friendship bends, and weeps.



THE DEATH OF HOEL.

AN ODE.

HAD I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright
Upon Deïra's squadrons hurl'd
To rush, and sweep them from the world !

Too, too secure in youthful pride,
By them, my friend, my Hoel, died,
Great Cian's son : of Madoc old
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold ;
Alone in nature's wealth array'd,
He ask'd and had the lovely maid.

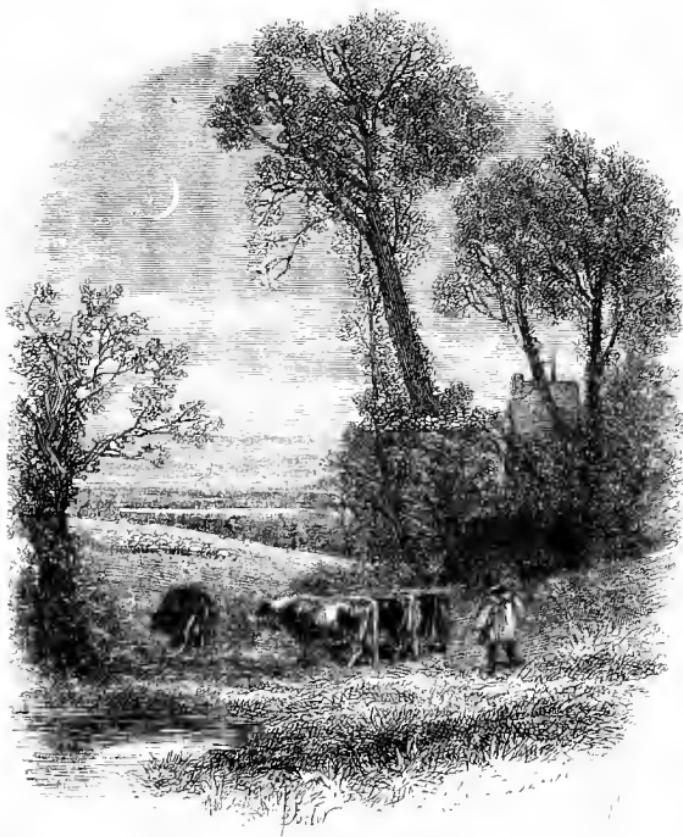
To Cattraeth's vale in glitt'ring row
Thrice two hundred warriors go :
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck,
Wreath'd in many a golden link :
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.

Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn :
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong
(Bursting through the bloody throng),
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall.



HAVE ye seen the tusky boar,
Or the bull, with sullen roar,
On surrounding foes advance ?
So Caràdoc bore his lance.

CONAN's name, my lay, rehearse,
Build to him the lofty verse,
Sacred tribute of the bard,
Verse, the hero's sole reward.
As the flame's devouring force,
As the whirlwind in its course,
As the thunder's fiery stroke,
Glancing on the shiver'd oak,
Did the sword of Conan mow
The crimson harvest of the foe.



"The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."



*WRITTEN
IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.*

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
 The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
 And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
 And all the air a solemn stillness holds,

Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care ;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke :
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor grandeur bear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor. :

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre :

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;

Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray ;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some fail memorial still erected nigh,
With unouth rhymes and shapeless sculptnre deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Mnse,
The place of fame and elegy supply :
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;

If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
“Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn :

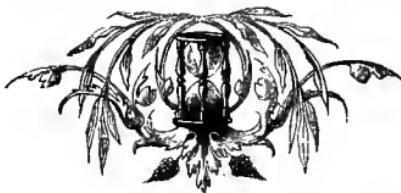
“There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove ;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

“One morn I miss'd him on the 'custom'd hill, |
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree ;
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he :

“The next, with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw
him borne :—

Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

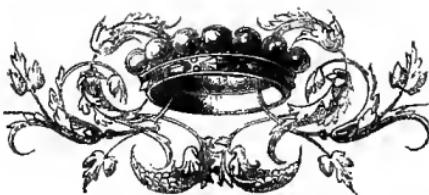


THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown :
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heavn did a recompense as largely send :
He gave to mis'ry (all he had) a tear,
Hegain'd from heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.



A LONG STORY.

IN Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands :
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the pow'r of fairy hands

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each panel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages, that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls ;
The seals and maces danced before him.



"In Britain's Isle, no matter where,
an ancient pile of building stands"

His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

What, in the very first beginning !
Shame of the versifying tribe !
Your hist'ry whither are you spinning ?
Can you do nothing but describe ?

A house there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning issues
A brace of warriors, not in buff,
But rustling in their silks and tissues.

The first came *cap-a-pie* from France,
Her conqu'ring destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,
And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other Amazon kind heav'n
Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and satire ;
But Cobham had the polish giv'n,
And tipp'd her arrows with good-nature.

To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarse panegyrics would but tease her ;

Melissa is her "*nom de guerre.*"

Alas, who would not wish to please her !

With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long, they hid their armour ;
And veil'd their weapons, bright and keen,
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame, in the shape of Mr. P—t,
(By this time all the parish know it,)
Had told that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked imp they call a poet :

Who prowld the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows, and lamed the deer,
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheasants.

My lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
To rid the manor of such vermin.

The heroines undertook the task,
Thro' lanes unknown, o'er stiles they ventured,
Rapp'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,
But bounce into the parlour enter'd.

The trembling family they daunt,
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,
And up-stairs in a whirlwind rattle :

Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,
Run hurry-scurry round the floor,
And o'er the hed and tester clamber ;

Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio !
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creased, like dogs'-ears, in a folio.

On the first marching of the troops,
The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Convey'd him underneath their hoops
To a small closet in the garden.

So Rumour says : (who will, believe,)
But that they left the door ajar,
Where, safe and laughing in his sleeve,
He heard the distant din of war.

Short was his joy. He little knew
The pow'r of magic was no fable ;

Out of the window, whisk, they flew,
But left a spell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,
The poet felt a strange disorder;
Transparent bird-lime form'd the middle,
And chains invisible the border.

So cunning was the apparatus,
The powerful pot-hooks did so move him,
That, will he, nill he, to the great house
He went, as if the devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phoebus he preferr'd his case,
And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.

The godhead would have back'd his quarrel;
But with a blush, on recollection,
Own'd that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.

The court was sate, the culprit there,
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping,
The lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping :

Such as in silence of the night
Come (sweep) along some winding entry,
(Tyacke has often seen the sight,)
Or at the chapel-door stand sentry:

In peaked hoods and mantles tarnish'd,
Sour visages, enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once, that garnish'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary.

The peeress comes. The audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission :
She curtsies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.

The bard, with many an artful fib,
Had in imagination fenced him,
Disproved the arguments of Squib,
And all that Groom could urge against him.

But soon his rhetoric forsook him,
When he the solemn hall had seen ;
A sudden fit of ague shook him,
He stood as mute as poor Macleane.

Yet something he was heard to mutter,
“ How in the park beneath an old tree,
(Without design to hurt the butter,
Or any malice to the poultry,)

“ He once or twice had penn'd a sonnet ;
 Yet hoped, that he might save his bacon :
Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
 He ne'er was for a conjurer taken.”

The ghostly prudes with hagged face
 Already had condemn'd the sinner.
My lady rose, and with a grace—
 She smiled, and bid him come to dinner.

“ Jesu-Maria ! Madam Bridget,
 Why, what can the Viscountess mean ?”
(Cried the square-hoods in woful fidget)
 “ The times are alter'd quite and clean !

“ Decorum's turn'd to mere civility ;
 Her air and all her manners show it.
Commend me to her affability !
 Speak to a commoner and a poet !”

[Here five hundred stanzas are lost.]

And so God save our noble king,
 And guard us from long-winded lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
 And keep my lady from her rubbers.

POSTHUMOUS
POEMS AND FRAGMENTS.





*ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM
VICISSITUDE.*

NOW the golden morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She woos the tardy Spring :
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground ;
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet ;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
The birds his presence greet :

But chief, the skylark warbles high
His trembling thrilling ecstasy ;
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul ! on wings of fire,
Rise the rapt'rous choir among ;
Hark ! 'tis Nature strikes the lyre,
And leads the gen'ral song :
'Warm let the lyric transport flow,
Warm as the ray that bids it glow ;
And animates the vernal grove
With health, with harmony, and love.'

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly ;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by :
Their raptures now that wildly flow,
No yesterday nor morrow know ;
'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow
Soft Reflection's hand can trace ;
And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw
A melancholy grace ;

While Hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,
See a kindred Grief pursue ;
Behind the steps that Misery treads,
Approaching Comfort view :
The hues of Bliss more brightly glow,
Chastised by sable tints of Woe ;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tossed
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again :
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise.

Humble Quiet builds her cell,
Near the source whence Pleasure flows ;
She eyes the clear crystalline well,
And tastes it as it goes.

‘While’ far below the ‘madding’ crowd
‘Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,’
Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,
‘And’ perish in the boundless deeps.

Mark where Indolence and Pride,
‘Sooth’d by flattery’s tinkling sound,’
Go, softly rolling, side by side,
Their dull but daily round :
‘To these, if Hebe’s self should bring
The purest cup from Pleasure’s spring,
Say, can they taste the flavour high
Of sober, simple, genuine joy ?

‘Mark Ambition’s march sublime
Up to Power’s meridian height ;
While pale-eyed Envy sees him climb,
And sickens at the sight.

Phantoms of danger, death, and dread,
Float hourly round Ambition’s head ;
While Spleen, within his rival’s breast,
Sits brooding on her scorpion breast.

‘Happier he, the peasant, far,
From the pangs of passion free,
That breathes the keen yet wholesome air
Of rugged penury.



"And inc him home, at evening's close,
To sweet repast and calm repose."

He, when his morning task is done,
Can slumber in the noontide sun ;
And hie him home, at evening's close,
To sweet repast, and calm repose.

'He, unconscious whence the bliss,
Feels, and owns in carols rude,
That all the circling joys are his,
Of dear Vicissitude.

From toil he wins his spirits light,
From busy day the peaceful night ;
Rich, from the very want of wealth,
In heaven's best treasures, peace and health.'





*TRANSLATION OF A PASSAGE FROM
STATIUS.*

THEB. LIB. VI. VER. 704—724

THIRD in the labours of the disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon ;
Artful and strong he poised the well-known weight,
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fired by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he tried before he flung,
Braced all his nerves, and every sinew strung ;
Then with a tempest's whirl, and wary eye,
Pursued his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high ;
The orb on high, tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,

Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory.
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall ;
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when from *Ætna*'s smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy rock :
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,
And parting surges round the vessel roar ;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses 'scaped his giant arm.
A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay,
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold.

CAMBRIDGE, May 8, 1736.





THE FRAGMENT OF A TRAGEDY,

DESIGNED BY MR. GRAY ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE DEATH OF AGRIPPINA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGRIPPINA, *the Empress-mother.*

NERO, *the Emperor.*

POPPÆA, *believed to be in love with Otho.*

OTHO, *a young man of quality, in love with Poppæa.*

SENECA, *the Emperor's Preceptor.*

ANICETUS, *Captain of the Guards.*

DEMETRIUS, *the Cynic, friend to Seneca.*

ACERONIA, *Confidant to Agrippina.*

SCENE—*The Emperor's villa at Baia.*

ACT I. SCENE I.

AGRIPPINA. ACERONIA.

AGRIP. 'Tis well, begone ! your errand is per-
form'd, [Speaks as to Anicetus entering.
The message needs no comment. Tell your master,
His mother shall obey him. Say you saw her
Yielding due reverence to his high command :
Alone, unguarded, and without a lictor,

As fits the daughter of Germanicus.
Say, she retired to Antium ; there to tend
Her household cares, a woman's best employment.
What if you add, how she turn'd pale and trembled :
You think, you spied a tear stand in her eye,
And would have dropp'd, but that her pride restrain'd it !
(Go ! you can paint it well) 'twill profit you,
And please the stripling. Yet 'twould dash his joy
To hear the spirit of Britannicus
Yet walks on earth : at least there are who know
Without a spell to raise, and bid it fire
A thousand haughty hearts, unused to shake
When a boy frowns, nor to be lured with smiles
To taste of hollow kindness, or partake
His hospitable board : they are aware
Of th' unpledged bowl, they love not aconite.

ACER. He's gone : and much I hope these walls
alone
And the mute air are privy to your passion.
Forgive your servant's fears, who sees the danger
Which fierce resentment cannot fail to raise
In haughty youth, and irritated power.

AGRIP. And dost thou talk to me, to me of danger,
Of haughty youth and irritated power,

To her that gave it being, her that arm'd
This painted Jove, and taught his novice hand
To aim the forked bolt ; while he stood trembling,
Scared at the sound, and dazzled with its brightness ?

'Tis like, thou hast forgot, when yet a stranger
To adoration, to the grateful steam
Of flattery's incense, and obsequious vows
From voluntary realms, a puny boy,
Deck'd with no other lustre than the blood
Of Agrippina's race, he lived unknown
To fame, or fortune ; haply eyed at distance
Some edileship, ambitious of the power
To judge of weights and measures ; scarcely dared
On expectation's strongest wing to soar
High as the consulate, that empty shade
Of long-forgotten liberty : when I
Opened his young eye to bear the blaze of greatness ;
Show'd him where empire tower'd, and bade him strike
The noble quarry. Gods ! then was the time
To shrink from danger ; fear might then have worn
The mask of prudence ; but a heart like mine,
A heart that glows with the pure Julian fire,
If bright Ambition from her craggy seat
Display the radiant prize, will mount undaunted,
Gain the rough heights, and grasp the dangerous
honour.

ACER. Through various life I have pursued your steps,

Have seen your soul, and wonder'd at its daring :
Hence rise my fears. Nor am I yet to learn
How vast the debt of gratitude which Nero
To such a mother owes ; the world, you gave him,
Suffices not to pay the obligation.

I well remember too (for I was present)
When, in a secret and dead hour of night,
Due sacrifice perform'd with barb'rous rites
Of mutter'd charms, and solemn invocation,
You bade the Magi call the dreadful powers,
That read futurity, to know the fate
Impending o'er your son : their answer was,
If the son reign, the mother perishes.
Perish (you cried) the mother ! reign the son !
He reigns, the rest is Heaven's ; who oft has bade,
Ev'n when its will seem'd wrote in lines of blood,
Th' unthought event disclose a whiter meaning.
Think too how oft in weak and sickly minds
The sweets of kindness lavishly indulged
Rankle to gall ; and benefits too great
To be repaid, sit heavy on the soul,
As unrequited wrongs. The willing homage
Of prostrate Rome, the senate's joint applause,
The riches of the earth, the train of pleasures

That wait on youth, and arbitrary sway :
These were your gift, and with them you bestow'd
The very power he has to be ungrateful.

AGRIP. Thus ever grave and undisturb'd reflection
Pours its cool dictates in the madding ear
Of rage, and thinks to quench the fire it feels not.
Say'st thou I must be cautious, must be silent,
And tremble at the phantom I have raised ?
Carry to him thy timid counsels. He
Perchance may heed 'em : tell him too, that one
Who had such liberal power to give, may still
With equal power resume that gift, and raise
A tempest that shall shake her own creation
To its original atoms—tell me ! say,
This mighty emperor, this dreaded hero,
Has he beheld the glittering front of war ?
Knows his soft ear the trumpet's thrilling voice,
And outcry of the battle ? Have his limbs
Sweat under iron harness ? Is he not
The silken son of dalliance, nursed in ease
And pleasure's flow'ry lap ?—Rubellius lives,
And Sylla has his friends, though school'd by fear
To bow the supple knee, and court the times,
With shows of fair obeisance ; and a call,
Like mine, might serve belike to wake pretensions

Drowsier than theirs, who boast the genuine blood
Of our imperial house.

ACER. Did I not wish to check this dangerous
passion,

I might remind my mistress that her nod
Can rouse eight hardy legions, wont to stem
With stubborn nerves the tide, and face the rigour
Of bleak Germania's snows. Four, not less brave,
That in Armenia quell the Parthian force
Under the warlike Corbulo, by you
Mark'd for their leader : these, by ties confirm'd,
Of old respect and gratitude, are yours.
Surely the Masians too, and those of Egypt,
Have not forgot your sire : the eye of Rome
And the Prætorian camp have long revered,
With custom'd awe, the daughter, sister, wife,
And mother of their Cæsars.

AGRIP. Ha ! by Juno,
It bears a noble semblance. On this base
My great revenge shall rise ; or say we sound
The trump of liberty ; there will not want,
Even in the servile senate, ears to own
Her spirit-stirring voice ; Soranus there,
And Cassius ; Vetus too, and Thrasea,

Minds of the antique cast, rough, stubborn souls,
That struggle with the yoke. How shall the spark
Unquenchable, that glows within their breasts,
Blaze into freedom, when the idle herd
(Slaves from the womb, created but to stare,
And bellow in the Circus) yet will start,
And shake 'em at the name of liberty,
Stung by a senseless word, a vain tradition,
As there were magic in it? Wrinkled beldams
Teach it their grandchildren, as somewhat rare
That anciently appear'd; but when extends
Beyond their chronicle—oh! 'tis a cause
To arm the hand of childhood, and rebrace
The slacken'd sinews of time-wearied age.

Yes, we may meet, ungrateful boy, we may!
Again the buried Genius of old Rome
Shall from the dust uprear his reverend head,
Roused by the shout of millions: there before
His high tribunal thou and I appear.
Let majesty sit on thy awful brow,
And lighten from thy eye: around thee call
The gilded swarm that wantons in the sunshine
Of thy full favour; Seneca be there
In gorgeous phrase of labour'd eloquence
To dress thy plea, and Burrhus strengthen it
With his plain soldier's oath, and honest seeming.

Against thee, liberty and Agrippina :
The world, the prize ; and fair befall the victors.

But soft ! why do I waste the fruitless hours
In threats unexecuted ? Haste thee, fly
These hated walls that seem to mock my shame,
And cast me forth in duty to their lord.

ACER. 'Tis time to go, the sun is high advanced,
And, ere mid-day, Nero will come to Baiae.

AGRIP. My thought aches at him ; not the basilisk
More deadly to the sight, than is to me
The cool injurious eye of frozen kindness.
I will not meet its poison. Let him feel
Before he sees me.

ACER. Why, then, stays my sovereign,
Where he so soon may—

AGRIP. Yes, I will be gone,
But not to Antium—all shall be confess'd,
Whate'er the frivolous tongue of giddy fame
Has spread among the crowd ; things that but
whisper'd
Have arch'd the hearer's brow, and riveted
His eyes in fearful ecstacy : no matter

What ; so't be strange, and dreadful.—Sorceries,
Assassinations, poisonings—the deeper
My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.

And you, ye manes of ambition's victims,
Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied ghosts
Of the Syllani, doom'd to early death,
(Ye unavailing horrors, fruitless crimes !)
If from the realms of night my voice ye hear,
In lieu of penitence, and vain remorse,
Accept my vengeance. Though by me ye bled,
He was the cause. My love, my fears for him,
Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart,
And froze them up with deadly cruelty.
Yet, if your injured shades demand my fate,
If murder cries for murder, blood for blood,
Let me not fall alone ; but crush his pride,
And sink the traitor in his mother's ruin. [*Exeunt.*]



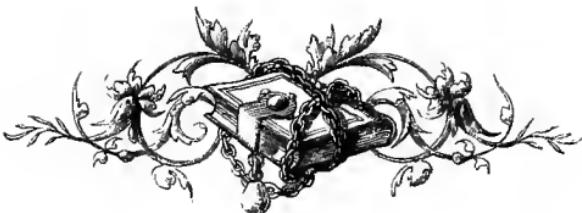
SCENE II.

OTHO. POPPÆA.

OTHO. Thus far we're safe. Thanks to the rosy
queen
Of amorous thefts : and had her wanton son
Lent us his wings, we could not have beguiled
With more elusive speed the dazzled sight
Of wakeful jealousy. Be gay securely ;
Dispel, my fair, with smiles, the tim'rous cloud
That hangs on thy clear brow. So Helen look'd,
So her white neck reclined, so was she borne
By the young Trojan to his gilded bark
With fond reluctance, yielding modesty,
And oft reverted eye, as if she knew not
Whether she fear'd, or wish'd to be pursued.

* * * * *





HYMN TO IGNORANCE.

A FRAGMENT.

HAIL, horrors, hail ! ye ever gloomy bowers,
Ye Gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,
Where rushy Camus' slowly-winding flood
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud :
Glad I revisit thy neglected reign,
Oh take me to thy peaceful shade again !
But chiefly thee, whose influence breathed from high
Augments the native darkness of the sky ;
Ah, Ignorance ! soft salutary power !
Prostrate with filial reverence I adore.
Thrice hath Hyperion roll'd his annual race,
Since weeping I forsook thy fond embrace.
Oh say, successful dost thou still oppose
Thy leaden ægis 'gainst our ancient foes ?

Still stretch, tenacious of thy right divine,
The massy sceptre o'er thy slumb'ring line ?
And dews Lethean through the land dispense
To steep in slumbers each benighted sense ?
If any spark of wit's delusive ray
Break out, and flash a momentary day,
With damp, cold touch forbid it to aspire,
And huddle up in fogs the dang'rous fire.

Oh say—she hears me not, but, careless grown,
Lethargic nods upon her ebon throne.
Goddess ! awake, arise ! alas, my fears !
Can powers immortal feel the force of years ?
Not thus of old, with ensigns wide unfurl'd,
She rode triumphant o'er the vanquish'd world ;
Fierce nations own'd her unresisted might,
And all was ignorance, and all was night.

Oh ! sacred age ! Oh ! times for ever lost !
(The schoolman's glory, and the churchman's boast.)
For ever gone—yet still to fancy new,
Her rapid wings the transient scene pursue,
And bring the buried ages back to view.

High on her car, behold the grandain ride
Like old Sesostris with barbaric pride ;
* * * a team of harness'd monarchs bend

* * * * *



*THE ALLIANCE OF
EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.*

A FRAGMENT.

ESSAY I.

——— Πόταγ', ὡς 'γαθέ· τὰν γὰρ ἀοιδὰν
Οὕτι πα εἰς 'Αίδαν γε τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.
THEOCRITUS, Id. i. 63.

A S sickly plants betray a niggard earth,
Whose barren bosom starves her generous birth,
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains,
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins :
And as in climes, where Winter holds his reign,
The soil, though fertile, will not teem in vain,

Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish skies :
So draw mankind in vain the vital airs,
Unform'd, unfriended, by those kindly cares,
That health and vigour to the soul impart,
Spread the young thought, and warm the opening
heart :

So fond Instruction on the growing powers
Of nature idly lavishes her stores,
If equal Justice with unclouded face
Smile not indulgent on the rising race,
And scatter with a free, though frugal hand,
Light golden showers of plenty o'er the land :
But Tyranny has fix'd her empire there,
To check their tender hopes with chilling fear,
And blast the blooming promise of the year.

This spacious animated scene survey,
From where the rolling orb, that gives the day,
His sable sons with nearer course surrounds
To either pole, and life's remotest bounds,
How rude soe'er th' exterior form we find,
Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,
Alike to all, the kind, impartial heav'n
The sparks of truth and happiness has giv'n :
With sense to feel, with memory to retain,
They follow pleasure, and they fly from pain ;

Their judgment mends the plan their fancy draws,
The event presages, and explores the cause ;
The soft returns of gratitude they know,
By fraud elude, by force repel the foe ;
While mutual wishes, mutual woes endear
The social smile, the sympathetic tear.

Say, then, through ages by what fate confined
To different climes seem different souls assign'd ?
Here measured laws and philosophic ease
Fix, and improve the polish'd arts of peace ;
There industry and gain their vigils keep,
Command the winds, and tame th' unwilling deep :
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail ;
There languid pleasure sighs in every gale.
Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar
Has Scythia breathed the living cloud of war ;
And, where the deluge burst, with sweepy sway
Their arms, their kings, their gods were roll'd away.
As oft have issued, host impelling host,
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields :
With grim delight the brood of winter view
A brighter day, and heav'ns of azure hue ;
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.

Proud of the yoke, and pliant to the rod,
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's nod,
While European freedom still withstands
Th' encroaching tide that drowns her lessening
lands ;
And sees far off, with an indignant groan,
Her native plains, and empires once her own ?
Can opener skies and suns of fiercer flame
O'erpower the fire, that animates our frame ;
As lamps, that shed at eve a cheerful ray,
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day ?
Need we the influence of the northern star
To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war ?
And, where the face of nature laughs around,
Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted ground ?
Unmanly thought ! what seasons can control,
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Who, consciens of the source from whence she
springs,
By reason's light, on resolution's wings,
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Libya's deserts and through Zembla's snows ?
She bids each slumb'ring energy awake,
Another touch, another temper take,
Suspends th' inferior laws that rule our clay :
The stubborn elements confess her sway ;

Their little wants, their low desires, refine,
And raise the mortal to a height divine.

Not but the human fabric from the birth
Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth :
As various tracts enforce a various toil,
The manners speak the idiom of their soil.
An iron race the mountain-cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain :
For where unwearyed sinews must be found
With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground,
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood,
To brave the savage rushing from the wood,
What wonder if to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit, what by strength they
gain'd ?

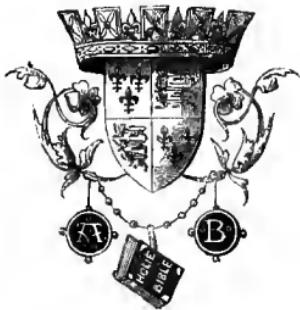
And while their rocky ramparts round they see,
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow)
Insult the plenty of the vales below ?
What wonder, in the sultry climes, that spread
Where Nile redundant o'er his summer-bed
From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,
And broods o'er Egypt with his wat'ry wings,
If with advent'rous oar and ready sail
The dusky people drive before the gale ;

Or on frail floats to neighb'ring cities ride,
That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide

* * * * *

[The following couplet, which was intended to have been introduced in the poem on the Alliance of Education and Government, is much too beautiful to be lost.—*Mason.*]

When love could teach a monarch to be wise,
And gospel-light first dawn'd from Bullen's eyes.





STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

A FRAGMENT.

IN silent gaze the tuneful choir among,
Half pleased, half blushing, let the Muse admire,
While Bentley leads her sister-art along,
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.

See, in their course, each transitory thought
Fix'd by his touch a lasting essence take ;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local symmetry and life awake !

The tardy rhymes that used to linger on,
To censure cold, and negligent of fame,
In swifter measures animated run,
And catch a lustre from his genuine flame.

Ah ! could they catch his strength, his easy grace,
His quick creation, his unerring line ;
The energy of Pope they might efface,
And Dryden's harmony submit to mine.

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration giv'n,
That burns in Shakespeare's or in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of heav'n.

As when conspiring in the diamond's blaze,
The meaner gems that singly charm the sight,
Together dart their intermingled rays,
And dazzle with a luxury of light.

Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
My lines a secret sympathy 'impart ;'
And as their pleasing influence 'flows confess,'
A sigh of soft reflection 'heaves the heart.'

* * * * *



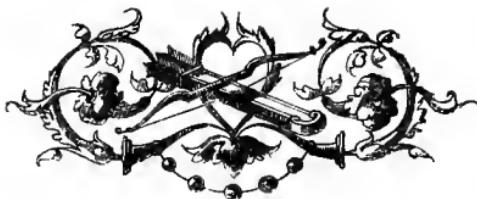


SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER.

WRITTEN IN 1761, AND FOUND IN ONE OF HIS
POCKET-BOOKS.

TOO poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune,
He had not the method of making a fortune :
Could love, and could hate, so was thought somewhat
odd ;
No very great wit, he believed in a God :
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left Church and State to Charles Townshend and
Squire.





AMATORY LINES.

WITH beauty, with pleasure surrounded, to languish—
To weep without knowing the cause of my anguish :
To start from short slumbers, and wish for the morning—
To close my dull eyes when I see it returning ;
Sighs sudden and frequent, looks ever dejected—
Words that steal from my tongue, by no meaning connected !
Ah ! say, fellow-swains, how these symptoms befell me ?
They smile, but reply not—Sure Delia will tell me !



SONG.

THYRSIS, when we parted, swore
 Ere the spring he would return—
Ah ! what means yon violet flower !
 And the bud that decks the thorn !
'Twas the lark that upward sprung !
'Twas the nightingale that sung !

Idle notes ! untimely green !
 Why this unavailing haste ?
Western gales and skies serene
 Speak not always winter past.
Cease, my doubts, my fears to move,
Spare the honour of my love.





TOPHET.

AN EPIGRAM.

THUS Tophet look'd; so grinn'd the brawling
fiend,
Whilst frightened prelates bow'd and call'd him friend.
Our mother-church, with half-averted sight,
Blush'd as she bless'd her grisly proselyte;
Hosannas rung through hell's tremendous borders,
And Satan's self had thoughts of taking orders.





IMPROPTU,

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW, IN 1766, OF THE SEAT AND
RUINS OF A DECEASED NOBLEMAN, AT
KINGSGATE, KENT.

OLD, and abandon'd by each venal friend,
Here H——d form'd the pious resolution
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A broken character and constitution.

On this congenial spot he fix'd his choice ;
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand ;
Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwreck'd, dread to land.

Here reign the blustering North and blighting East,
No tree is heard to whisper, bird to sing ;

Yet Nature could not furnish out the feast,
Art he invokes new horrors still to bring.

Here mouldering fanes and battlements arise,
Turrets and arches nodding to their fall,
Unpeopled monast'ries delude our eyes,
And mimic desolation covers all.

“ Ah ! ” said the sighing peer, “ had B—te been true,
Nor M—’s, R—’s, B—’s friendship vain,
Far better scenes than these had blest our view,
And realized the beauties which we feign :

“ Purged by the sword, and purified by fire,
Then had we seen proud London’s hated walls ;
Owls would have hooted in St. Peter’s choir,
And foxes stunk and litter’d in St. Paul’s.”





EXTRACTS.

PROPERTIUS, LIB. III. ELEG. V. v. 19.

“ Me juvat in primâ coluisse Helicona juventâ,” &c.

IMITATED.

LONG as of youth the joyous hours remain,
Me may Castalia's sweet recess detain,
Fast by the umbrageous vale lull'd to repose,
Where Aganippe warbles as it flows ;
Or roused by sprightly sounds from out the trance,
I'd in the ring knit hands, and join the Muses' dance.
Give me to send the laughing bowl around,
My soul in Bacchus' pleasing fetters bound ;
Let on this head unfading flower's reside,
There bloom the vernal rose's earliest pride ;
And when, our flames commission'd to destroy,
Age step 'twixt Love and me, and intercept the joy ;
When my changed head these locks no more shall
know,

And all its jetty honours turn to snow ;
Then let me rightly spell of Nature's ways ;
To Providence, to **HIM** my thoughts I'd raise,
Who taught this vast machine its stedfast laws,
That first, eternal, universal cause ;
Search to what regions yonder star retires,
That monthly waning hides her paly fires,
And whence, anew revived, with silver light
Relumes her crescent orb to cheer the dreary night :
How rising winds the face of ocean sweep,
Where lie the eternal fountains of the deep,
And whence the cloudy magazines maintain
Their wintry war, or pour the autumnal rain ;
How flames perhaps, with dire confusion hurl'd,
Shall sink this beauteous fabric of the world ;
What colours paint the vivid arch of Jove ;
What wondrous force the solid earth can move,
When Pindus' self approaching ruin dreads,
Shakes all his pines, and bows his hundred heads ;
Why does yon orb, so exquisitely bright,
Obscure his radiance in a short-lived night ;
Whence the Seven-Sisters' congregated fires,
And what Bootes' lazy waggon tires ;
How the rude surge its sandy bounds control ;
Who measured out the year, and bade the seasons
roll ;

If realms beneath those fabled torments know,
Pangs without respite, fires that ever glow,
Earth's monster brood stretch'd on their iron bed,
The hissing terrors round Alecto's head,
Scarce to nine acres Tityus' bulk confined,
The triple dog that scares the shadowy kind,
All angry heaven inflicts, or hell can feel,
The pendent rock, Ixion's whirling wheel,
Famine at feasts, or thirst amid the stream ;
Or are our fears the enthusiast's empty dream,
And all the scenes, that hurt the grave's repose,
But pictured horror and poetic woes.

These soft inglorious joys my hours engage ;
Be love my yonth's pursnit, and science crown my age.





PROPERTIUS, LIB. II. ELEG. I. v. 17.

“Quod mihi si tantum, Mæcenas, fata dedissent,” &c.

YET would the tyrant Love permit me raise
My feeble voice, to sound the victor's praise,
To paint the hero's toil, the ranks of war,
The laurell'd triumph and the sculptur'd car ;
No giant race, no tumult of the skies,
No mountain-structures in my verse should rise,
Nor tale of Thebes, nor Ilium there should be,
Nor how the Persian trod the indignant sea ;
Not Marius' Cimbrian wreaths would I relate,
Nor lofty Carthage struggling with her fate.
Here should Augustus great in arms appear,
And thou Mæcenas, be my second care ;
Here Mutina from flames and famine free,
And there the ensanguined wave of Sicily,
And sceptred Alexandria's captive shore,
And sad Philippi, red with Roman gore :

Then, while the vaulted skies loud i'os rend,
In golden chains should loaded monarchs bend,
And hoary Nile with pensive aspect seem
To mourn the glories of his sevenfold stream,
While prows, that late in fierce encounter met,
Move through the sacred way and vainly threat,
Thee too the Muse should consecrate to fame,
And with her garlands weave thy ever-faithful name.

But nor Callimachus' enervate strain
May tell of Jove, and Phlegra's blasted plain ;
Nor I with unaccustomed vigour trace
Back to its source divine the Julian race.
Sailors to tell of winds and seas delight,
The shepherd of his flocks, the soldier of the fight.
A milder warfare I in verse display ;
Each in his proper art should waste the day :
Nor thou my gentle calling disapprove,
To die is glorious in the bed of Love.

Happy the youth, and not unknown to fame,
Whose heart has never felt a second flame.
Oh, might that envied happiness be mine !
To Cynthia all my wishes I confine ;
Or if, alas ! it be my fate to try
Another love, the quicker let me die ;
But she, the mistress of my faithful breast,
Has oft the charms of constancy confess,

Condemns her fickle sex's fond mistake,
And hates the tale of Troy for Helen's sake.
Me from myself the soft enchantress stole ;
Ah ! let her ever my desires control,
Or if I fall the victim of her scorn,
From her loved door may my pale corse be borne.
The power of herbs can other harms remove,
And find a cure for every ill, but love.
The Lemnian's hurt Machaon could repair,
Heal the slow chief, and send again to war ;
To Chiron Phoenix owed his long-lost sight,
And Phœbus' son recall'd Androgeon to the light,
Here arts are vain, e'en magic here must fail,
The powerful mixture and the midnight spell,
The hand that can my captive heart release,
And to this bosom give its wonted peace,
May the long thirst of Tantalus allay,
Or drive the infernal vulture from his prey.
For ills unseen what remedy is found ?
Or who can probe the undiscover'd wound ?
The bed avails not, nor the leech's care,
Nor changing skies can hurt, nor sultry air.
'Tis hard th' elusive symptoms to explore :
To-day the lover walks, to-morrow is no more ;
A train of mourning friends attend his pall,
And wonder at the sudden funeral.

When then the Fates that breath they gave shall
claim,
And the short marble but preserve a name,
A little verse my all that shall remain ;
Thy passing courser's slackened speed restrain ;
(Thou envied honour of thy poet's days,
Of all our youth the ambition and the praise !)
Then to my quiet urn awhile draw near,
And say, while o'er that place you drop the tear,
Love and the fair were of his youth the pride ;
He lived, while she was kind ; and when she frown'd,
he died.





TASSO, GERUS. LIB. CANT. XIV. ST. 32.

“ Preser commiato, e si 'l desio gli sprona,” &c.

DISMISS'D at length, they break through all delay
To tempt the dangers of the doubtful way ;
And first to Ascalon their steps they bend,
Whose walls along the neighbouring sea extend,
Nor yet in prospect rose the distant shore ;
Scarce the hoarse waves from far were heard to roar,
When thwart the road a river roll'd its flood
Tempestuous, and all further course withstood ;
The torrent stream his ancient bounds disdains,
Swoll'n with new force, and late-descending rains.
Irresolute they stand ; when, lo ! appears
The wondrous Sage : vigorous he seem'd in years,
Awful his mien, low as his feet there flows
A vestment unadorn'd, though white as new-fall'n
snows ;

Against the stream the waves secure he trod,
His head a chaplet bore, his hand a rod.

As on the Rhine, when Boreas' fury reigns,
And winter binds the floods in icy chains,
Swift shoots the village-maid in rustic play,
Smooth, without step, adown the shining way,
Fearless in long excursion loves to glide,
And sports and wantons o'er the frozen tide.

So moved the seer, but on no harden'd plain ;
The river boil'd beneath, and rush'd toward the
main.

Where fix'd in wonder stood the warlike pair,
His course he turn'd, and thus relieved their care :

“ Vast, oh my friends, and difficult the toil
To seek your hero in a distant soil !
No common helps, no common guide ye need,
Art it requires, and more than winged speed.
What length of sea remains, what various lands,
Oceans unknown, inhospitable sands !
For adverse fate the captive chief has hurl'd
Beyond the confines of our narrow world :
Great things and full of wonder in your ears
I shall unfold ; but first dismiss your fears ;
Nor doubt with me to tread the downward road
That to the grotto leads, my dark abode.”

Scarce had he said, before the warriors' eyes

When mountain-high the waves disparted rise ;
The flood on either hand its billows rears,
And in the midst a spacious arch appears.
Their hands he seized, and down the steep he led
Beneath the obedient river's inmost bed ;
The watery glimmerings of a fainter day
Discover'd half, and half conceal'd their way ;
As when athwart the dusky woods by night
The uncertain crescent gleams a sickly light.
Through subterraneous passages they went,
Earth's inmost cells, and caves of deep descent ;
Of many a flood they view'd the secret source,
The birth of rivers rising to their course,
Whate'er with copious train its channel fills,
Floats into lakes, and bubbles into rills ;
The Po was there to see, Danubius' bed,
Euphrates' fount, and Nile's mysterious head.
Further they pass, where ripening minerals flow
And embryon metals undigested glow,
Sulphureous veins and living silver shine,
Which soon the parent sun's warm powers refine,
In one rich mass unite the precious store,
The parts combine and harden into ore :
Here gems break through the night with glittering
beam,
And paint the margin of the costly stream,

All stones of lustre shoot their vivid ray,
And mix'd attemper'd in a various day ;
Here the soft emerald smiles of verdant hue,
And rubies flame, with sapphire's heavenly blue,
The diamond there attracts the wondrous sight,
Proud of its thousand dyes and luxury of light.





N O T E S.

ON THE SPRING.

P. 1. The original manuscript title given by Gray to this Ode, was "Noontide." It appeared for the first time in Dodsley's Collection, vol. ii. p. 271, under the title of "Ode."

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT.

P. 4. On a favourite cat, called Selima, that fell into a China tub with gold fishes in it, and was drowned. Walpole, after the death of Gray, placed the China vase on a pedestal at Strawberry Hill, with a few lines of the Ode for its inscription.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

P. 7. *Her Henry's holy shade.*] King Henry the Sixth, founder of the College.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

P. 15. *Æolian lyre.*] Pindar styles his own poetry "Æolian."

P. 15. *Ceres' golden reign.*] Fields of corn.

P. 16. *Oh! Sov'reign of the willing soul.*] Power of harmony to calm the turbulent passions of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.

P. 16. *The Lord of War.*] Mars, the god of war.

P. 16. *The feather'd king.*] The eagle of Jove.

P. 16. *Thee the voice, the dance, obey.*] Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.

P. 16. *Idalia.*] The favourite retreat of Venus in Cyprus.

P. 16. *Cytherea's day.*] The festival of Venus.

P. 17. *Man's feeble race what ills await!*]) To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life, the muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends the day, by its cheerful presence, to dispel the gloom and terrors of the night.

P. 18. *In climes beyond the solar road.*] Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations: its connexion with Liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it.

P. 18. *Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep.*] Progress of Poetry from

Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there. Spenser imitated the Italian writers; Milton improved on them; but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.

P. 19. *In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid.]* SHAKESPEARE.

P. 20. *Nor second He, that rode sublime.]* MILTON.

P. 20. *The living throne, the sapphirc blaze.]* "For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And above the firmament, that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord." Ezek. i. 20, 25, 23.

P. 20. *With necks in thunder cloth'd.]* "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"—Job. This verse and the foregoing are meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes.

P. 21. *That the Theban eagle bear.]* Findar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise.

THE BARD.

P. 22. This Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

P. 22. *Helmet, nor hauberk's twisted mail.]* The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.

P. 22. *Snowdon's shaggy side.]* Snowdon was name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which includes all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway.

P. 23. *Scut Glo'ster.]* Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford: married at Westminster, May 2, 1290, to Joan de Acres or Acon (so called from having been born at Acon in the Holy Land), second daughter of King Edward.—He died 1295.

P. 23. *"To arms!" cried Mortimer.]* Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lord Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.

P. 24. *On dreary Arvon's shore they lie.]* The shores of Caernarvonshire, opposite to the Isle of Anglesey.

P. 24. *And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.]* See the Norwegian Ode (The Fatal Sisters) that follows.

P. 25. *The shrieks of death thro' Berkley's roof that ring.]* Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle.

P. 25. *She-wolf of France.*] Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen.

P. 25. *The scourge of heav'n.*] Triumphs of Edward the Third in France.

P. 25. *Low on his funeral couch he lies /*] Death of Edward the Third, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.

P. 25. *Is the sable warrior dead /*] Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.

P. 25. *Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows.*] Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign. See Froissart, and other contemporary writers.

P. 26. *Fill high the sparkling bowl.*] Richard the Second, as we are told by Archibishop Scroop and the confederate Lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers, was starved to death. The story of his assassination, by Sir Pieris of Exton, is of much later date.

P. 26. *Heard ye the din of battle bray.*] Ruinous wars of York and Lancaster.

P. 26. *Te towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed.*]

Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, &c. believed to have been murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Caesar.

P. 26. *Revere his consort's faith.*] Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.

P. 26. *His father's fame.*] Henry the Fifth.

P. 26. *And spare the meek usurper's holy head.*] Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.

P. 26. *Above, below, the rose of snow.*] The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster.

P. 26. *The bristled boar in infant-gore.*] The silver boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of the boar.

P. 27. *Half of thy heart we consecrate.*] Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places.

P. 27. *No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.*] It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and would return again to reign over Britain.

P. 27. *All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!*] Both Merlin and Talhessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the house of Tudor.

P. 28. *Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face.*] Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialineki, ambassador of Poland, says, "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestic deporture, than with the tartness of her princelie checkes."

P. 28. *Hear from the grave, great Tallessin, hear.*] Tallessin, chief of the bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.

P. 28. *In buskin'd measures move.*] SHAKSPEARE.

P. 29. *A voice, as of the cherub-choir.*] MILTON.

P. 29. *And distant warblings lessen on my ear.*] The succession of poets after Milton's time.

ODE FOR MUSIC.

P. 30. This Ode was performed in the Senate-House at Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the installation of his Grace Augustus-Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.

P. 32. *Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow.*] Edward the Third, who added the fleur-de-lys of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.

P. 32. *And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn.*] Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, comte de St. Paul in France; of whom tradition says, that her husband Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was slain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundress of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Marie de Valentia.

P. 32. *Princely Clare.*] Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward the First. Hence the poet gives her the epithet of *princely*. She founded Clare Hall.

P. 32. *And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose.*] Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry the Sixth, foundress of Queen's College. The poet has celebrated her conjugal fidelity in "The Bard," episode 2d, line 13th.—Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward the Fourth, hence called the paler rose, as being of the house of York. She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.

P. 32. *And either Henry there.*] Henry the Sixth and Eighth. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.

P. 33. *The venerable Mary'ret see/*] Countess of Richmond and Derby; the mother of Henry the Seventh, foundress of St. John's and Christ's Colleges.

P. 33. *A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.*] The Countess was a Beaufort and married to a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims descent from both these families.

P. 34. *The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings.*] Lord Treasurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the University in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

THE FATAL SISTERS.

P. 35. To be found in the Orcades of *Thormodns Torfseus; Hafniae, 1697, folio;* and also in *Bartholinus, p. 617, lib. iii. c. 1. 4to.*

Vitt er orpit syfir valfalli, &c.

In the eleventh century *Sigurd, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships and a considerable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of Sictryg with the silken beard*, who was then making war on his father-in-law *Brian, King of Duhlin*; the earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and *Sictryg* was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of *Brian* their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle), a native of Caithness in Scotland, of the name of *Durrad*, saw at a distance a number of persons on horseback riding at full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song; which when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and (each taking her portion) galloped six to the north, and as many to the south. These were the *Vulkyriur*, female divinities, *Parcae Militares*, servants of *Odin* (or *Woden*) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies *Choosers of the slain*. They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to *Valkalla*, the hall of *Odin*, or paradise of the brave; where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale: their numbers are not agreed upon, some authors representing them as *six*, some as *four*.

THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

P. 39. The original is to be found in *Sæmund's Edda*, and in *Bartholinus, De Causis contempnenda Mortis; Hafniae, 1697, quarto, lib. iii. c. ii. p. 632. Upreis Oðinn alda gautr, &c.*

P. 39. *Hela's drear abode.*] *Nifsheliar*, the hell of the Gothic nations,

consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle. Over it presided Hela, the goddess of death. Hela, in the *Edda*, is described with a dreadful countenance, and her body half flesh-colour and half blue.

P. 39. *Him the dog of darkness spied.*] The *Edda* gives this dog the name of Managaruar. He fed upon the lives of those that were to die.

P. 41. *Tell me what is done below.*] Odin was anxious about the fate of his son Balder, who had dreamed he was soon to die. He was killed by Odin's other son, Hoder, who was himself slain by Vali, the son of Odin and Rinda, consonant with this prophecy. (See the *Edda*.)

P. 41. *Once again my call obey.*] Women were looked upon by the Gothic nations as having a peculiar insight into futurity; and some there were that made profession of magic arts and divination. These travelled round the country, and were received in every house with great respect and honour. Such a woman bore the name of Volva Seidkona or Spakona. The dress of Thorbjorga, one of these prophetesses, is described at large in Eirik's *Raud Sogu* (Apud Bartholin. lib. 1. cap. iv. p. 688). "She had on a blue vest spangled all over with stones, a necklace of glass beads, and a cap made of the skin of a black lamb lined with white cat-skin. She leaned on a staff adorned with brass, with a round head set with stones; and was girt with an Hunlandish belt, at which hung her pouch full of magical instruments. Her buckins were of rough calf-skin, bound on with thongs studded with knobs of brass, and her gloves of white cat-skin, the fur turned inwards," &c. They were also called *Fiolkyngi*, or *Fiolkunnug*, i.e. Multi-scia; and *Visindakona*, i.e. *Oraculorum Mulier*; *Nornir*, i.e. *Farce*.

P. 42. *Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair.*] King Harcl made (according to the singular custom of his time) a solemn vow never to *clip or comb his hair* till he should have extended his sway over the whole country. (Herbert's *Iceland. Translat.* p. 39.)

P. 43. *What virgins these, in speechless woe!*] "It is not certain," says Mr. Herbert, "what Odin means by the question concerning the weeping virgins; but it has been supposed that it alludes to the embassy afterwards sent by Frigga to try to redeem Balder from the infernal regions, and that Odin betrays his divinity by mentioning what had not yet happened."—*Iceland. Translat.* p. 48.

P. 43. *But mother of the giant brood!*] In the Latin "mater trium gigantum;" probably Angerbode, who from her name seems to be "no prophetess of good;" and who bore to Lok, as the *Edda* says, three children, the wolf Fenris, the great serpent of Midgard, and Hela, all of them called giants in that system of mythology.

P. 44. *Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain.*] Lok is the evil being, who continues in chains till the *twilight of the gods* approaches: when he

shall break his bonds, the human race, the stars, and sun shall disappear; the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies; even Odin himself, and his kindred deities shall perish.

THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

P. 45. From Evans, Spec. of the Welsh Poetry, 1764, quarto, p. 25, where is a prose version of this poem, and p. 127. Owen succeeded his father Griffith ap Cynan in the principality of N. Wales. A.N. 1137. This battle was fought in the year 1137. Jones, Relics, vol. ii. p. 36.

The original Welsh of this poem was the composition of Gwalchmai the son of Melir, immediately after Prince Owen Gwynedd had defeated the combined fleets of Iceland, Denmark, and Norway, which had invaded his territory on the coast of Anglesea.

P. 45. *Gwyneth.*] North Wales.

P. 46. *Lochlin.*] Denmark.

P. 46. *The dragon-son of Mona stands.*] The red dragon is the device of Cadwallader, which all his descendants bore on their banners.

P. 46. *There the thund'ring strokes begin.*] "It seems," says Dr. Evans, "that the fleet landed in some part of the Firth of Menai, and that it was a kind of mixed engagement, some fighting from the shore, others from the ships: and probably the great slaughter was owing to its being low water, and that they could not sail."

EPIGRAPH ON MRS. JANE CLERKE.

P. 49. This lady, the wife of Dr. John Clerke, physician at Epsom, died April 27, 1757; and was buried in the church of Beckenham, Kent.

EPIGRAPH ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

P. 50. This Epitaph was written at the request of Mr. Frederick Montagu, who intended to have inscribed it on a monument at Bellisile, at the siege of which Sir W. Williams was killed, 1761.

THE DEATH OF HOEL.

P. 51. Selected from the Gododin of Aneurin, styled the Monarch of the Bards. He flourished about the time of Taliesin, A.N. 570. See Mr. Evans's Specimens, pp. 71 and 73.

"Aneurin with the flowing Muse, King of Bards, brother to Gildas Albanius the historian, lived under Mynyddawg of Edinburgh, a prince of the North, whose Eurdorchogion, or warriors wearing the golden torques, three hundred and sixty-three in number, were all slain, except Aneurin and two others, in a battle with the Saxons at Cattaeth, on the eastern coast of Yorkshire. His Gododin, an heroic poem written on that event, is perhaps the oldest and noblest production of that age." Jones's Relics, vol. i. 17.

P. 51. *Upon Deira's squadron hurl'd.*] The kingdom of Deira included the counties of Yorkshire, Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.

HAVE YE SEEN, &c.

P. 52. This and the following short fragment ought to have appeared among the Posthumous Pieces: but it was thought preferable to insert them in this place with the preceding fragment from the Gododin.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

P. 57. *Far from the madding crowd.*] In the first edition, the following verse preceded this,

"Hark! how the sacred calm that breathes around
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,
In still small accents whisp'ring from the ground
A grateful earnest of eternal peace."

P. 59. "Before the Epitaph, Mr. Gray originally inserted a very beautiful stanza, which was printed in some of the first editions, but afterwards omitted, because he thought that it was too long a parenthesis in this place. The lines however are, in themselves, exquisitely fine, and demand preservation:

"There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are showers of violets found:
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

A LONG STORY.

P. 60. Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, previous to its publication, was handed about in manuscript; and had amongst other admirers the Lady Cobham, who resided at the mansion-house at Stoke Foggis. The performance inducing her to wish for the author's acquaintance, her relation, Miss Speed, and Lady Schaub, then at her house, undertook to effect it. These two ladies waited upon the author at his aunt's solitary habitation, where he at that time resided; and not finding him at home, they left a card behind them. Mr. Gray, surprised at such a compliment, returned the visit. And as the beginning of this acquaintance bore some appearance of romance, he soon after gave a humorous account of it in the verses, which he entitled "A Long Story." Printed in 1753, with Mr. Bentley's designs.

P. 60. *An ancient pile of building stands.*] In the sixteenth century the house belonged to the Earls of Huntingdon, and to the family of Hatton. On the death of Lady Cobham, 1760, the estate was purchased from her executors by the late Hon. Thomas Penn, Lord proprietary of Pennsylvania: his son, the present John Penn, Esq. finding the interior

of the ancient mansion in a state of considerable decay, it was taken down in the year 1789, with the exception of a wing, which was preserved, partly for the sake of its effect as a ruin, harmonising with the churchyard, the poet's house, and the surrounding scenery.

P. 60. *The ceiling's fretted height.*] The style of building called Queen Elizabeth's is here admirably described, both with regard to its beauties and defects; the third and fourth stanzas delineate the fantastic manners of the time with equal truth and humour.

P. 60. *My grave Lord-Keeper.*] Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing.

P. 60. *Brawls.*] Brawls were figure-dances then in fashion.

P. 61. *The first came cap-a-pie from France.*] The lady's husband, Sir Luke Schaub, had been ambassador at Paris some years before.

P. 61. *The other Amazon.*] Miss Harriet Speed, Lady C.'s relation, afterwards married to the Count de Viry, Sardinian Envoy at the court of London.

P. 62. *Mr. P—t.*] The Rev. Mr. Purt, tutor to the Duke of Bridgewater, then at Eton School.

P. 62. *To rid the manor of such vermin.*] Henry the Fourth, in the fourth year of his reign, issued out the following commission against this species of vermin:—"And it is enacted, that no master-rimer, minstrel, or other vagabond, be in anywise sustained in the land of Wales, to make commoiths, or gatherings upon the people there."

P. 62. *O'er stiles they venturcd.*] The walk from Stoke old mansion, to the house occupied by the poet's family, is peculiarly retired. The house is the property of Captain Salter, and it has belonged to his family for many generations. It is a charming spot for a summer residence, but has undergone great alterations and improvements since Gray gave it up in 1758.

P. 64. *A spell upon the table.*] The note which the ladies left upon the table.

P. 64. *And from the gallery.*] The music-gallery which overlooked the hall.

P. 65. *Tyacke.*] The housekeeper.

P. 65. *Squib.*] Groom of the chamber.

P. 65. *Groom.*] The steward.

P. 65. *Macleanc.*] A famous highwayman, hanged the week before.

P. 66. See a Sequel to the Long Story, in Hakewill's History of Windsor, by John Penn, Esq., and a further sequel to that, by the late laureate, H. J. Pye, Esq.

ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICESITUDINE.

P. 89. Left unfinished by Gray. With additions by Mason, distinguished by inverted commas.

TRANSLATION OF A PASSAGE FROM STATIUS.

P. 74. This translation, which Gray sent to West, consisted of about a hundred and ten lines. Mr. Mason selected twenty-seven lines, which he published, as Gray's first attempt in English verse.

THE FRAGMENT OF A TRAGEDY.

P. 76. "The Britannicus of Racine, I know, was one of Gray's most favourite plays; and the admirable manner in which I have heard him say that he saw it represented at Paris, seems to have led him to choose the death of Agrippina for his first and only effort in the drama. The execution of it also, as far as it goes, is so very much in Racine's taste, that I suspect, if that great poet had been born an Englishman, he would have written precisely in the same style and manner. However as there is at present in this nation a general prejudice against declamatory plays, I agree with a learned friend, who perused the manuscript, that this fragment will be little relished by the many; yet the admirable strokes of nature and character with which it abounds, and the majesty of its diction, prevent me from withholding from the few, who I expect will relish it, so great a curiosity (to call it nothing more) as part of a tragedy written by Gray. These persons well know, that till style and sentiment be a little more regarded, mere action and passion will never secure reputation to the author, whatever they may do to the actor. It is the business of the one 'to strut and fret his hour upon the stage,' and if he frets and struts enough, he is sure to find his reward in the plaudit of an upper gallery; but the other ought to have some regard to the cooler judgment of the closet: for I will be bold to say, that if Shakespeare himself had not written a multitude of passages which please there as much as they do on the stage, his reputation would not stand so universally high as it does at present. Many of these passages, to the shame of our theatrical taste, are omitted constantly in the representation: but I say not this from conviction that the mode of writing, which Gray pursued, is the best for dramatic purposes. I think myself, what I have asserted elsewhere, that a medium between the French and English taste would be preferable to either; and yet this medium, if hit with the greatest nicety, would fail of success on our theatre, and that for a very obvious reason. Actors (I speak of the troop collectively) must all learn to speak as well as act in order to do justice to such a drama.

"But let me hasten to give the reader what little insight I can into Gray's plan, as I find and select it from two detached papers.

"AGRIPPINA, A TRAGEDY.

"The argument drawn out by him, in these two papers, under the idea of a plot and under-plot, I shall here unite; as it will tend to show that the action itself was possessed of sufficient unity.

"The drama opens with the indignation of Agrippina, at receiving her son's orders from Anicetus to remove from Baiae, and to have her guard taken from her. At this time Otho, having conveyed Poppaea from the house of her husband Rufus Crispinus, brings her to Baiae, where he means to conceal her among the crowd; or, if his fraud is discovered, to have recourse to the Emperor's authority; but, knowing the lawless temper of Nero, he determines not to have recourse to that expedient but on the utmost necessity. In the mean time he commits her to the care of Anicetus, whom he takes to be his friend, and in whose age he thinks he may safely confide. Nero is not yet come to Baiae: but Seneca, whom he sends before him, informs Agrippina of the accusation concerning Rubellius Plancus, and desires her to clear herself, which she does briefly: but demands to see her son, who, on his arrival, acquires her of all suspicion, and restores her to her honours. In the mean while, Anicetus, to whose care Poppaea had been entrusted by Otho, contrives the following plot to ruin Agrippina: he betrays his trust to Otho, and brings Nero, as it were by chance, to the sight of the beautiful Poppaea; the Emperor is immediately struck with her charms, and she, by a feigned resistance, increases his passion: though, in reality, she is from the first dazzled with the prospect of empire, and forgets Otho: she therefore joins Anicetus in his design of ruining Agrippina, soon perceiving that it will be for her interest. Otho hearing that the Emperor had seen Poppaea, is much enraged; but not knowing that this interview was obtained through the treachery of Anicetus, is readily persuaded by him to see Agrippina in secret, and acquaint her with his fears that her son Nero would marry Poppaea. Agrippina, to support her own power, and to wean the Emperor from the love of Poppaea, gives Otho encouragement, and promises to support him. Anicetus secretly introduces Nero to hear their discourse; who resolves immediately on his mother's death, and, by Anicetus's means, to destroy her by drowning. A solemn feast, in honour of their reconciliation, is to be made; after which, she being to go by sea to Bauli, the ship is so contrived as to sink or crush her; she escapes by accident, and returns to Baiae. In this interval Otho has an interview with Poppaea; and, being duped a second time by Anicetus and her, determines to fly with her into Greece, by means of a vessel which is to be furnished by Anicetus; but he, pretending to remove Poppaea on board in the night, conveys her to Nero's apartment: she then encourages and determines Nero to banish Otho, and finish the horrid deed he had attempted on his mother. Anicetus undertakes to execute his resolves; and, under pretence of a plot upon the Emperor's life, is sent with a guard to murder Agrippina, who is still at Baiae in imminent fear, and irresolute how to conduct herself. The account of her death, and the Emperor's horror and fruitless remorse, finishes the drama." —MASON.

THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.

P. 88. "Instead of compiling tables of chronology and natural history, why did not Mr. Gray apply the powers of his genius to finish the philosophic poem of which he has left such an exquisite specimen?"
—GIBBON.

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

P. 94. These were in compliment to Bentley, who drew a set of designs for Gray's poems, particularly a head-piece to the Long Story. The original drawings are in the library at Strawberry Hill. See H. Walpole's Works, vol. ii. p. 447. The words within the inverted commas were supplied by Mason, a corner of the old manuscript copy being torn.

SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER.

P. 96. *Squire.*] At that time Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and afterwards Bishop of St. David's.

SONG.

P. 98. Written at the request of Miss Speed, to an old air of Geminiani:—the thought from the French.

IMPROMPTU.

P. 100. Written at Denton in the spring of 1766.



